



## Where Your Textbook Dollar Goes:

by: Scott Pound

It seems that the cost of textbooks has gone through the roof. A full time student who is taking five courses spends about \$400 on books per year. With the increase in tuition last year, education costs just seem to be getting out of hand; however, with regard to book prices, the outlook seems to be more of the same.

The principle cause of high textbook prices is the fact that not many of them are printed. Students do not make up a very substantial market compared with the market for popular novels or biographies, for example. Also textbooks are always being updated in the form of new editions, making old editions virtually useless. These two factors make it difficult not only for students, but also for bookstore operators.

Running a bookstore is not always a profitable business. "Most bookstores lose

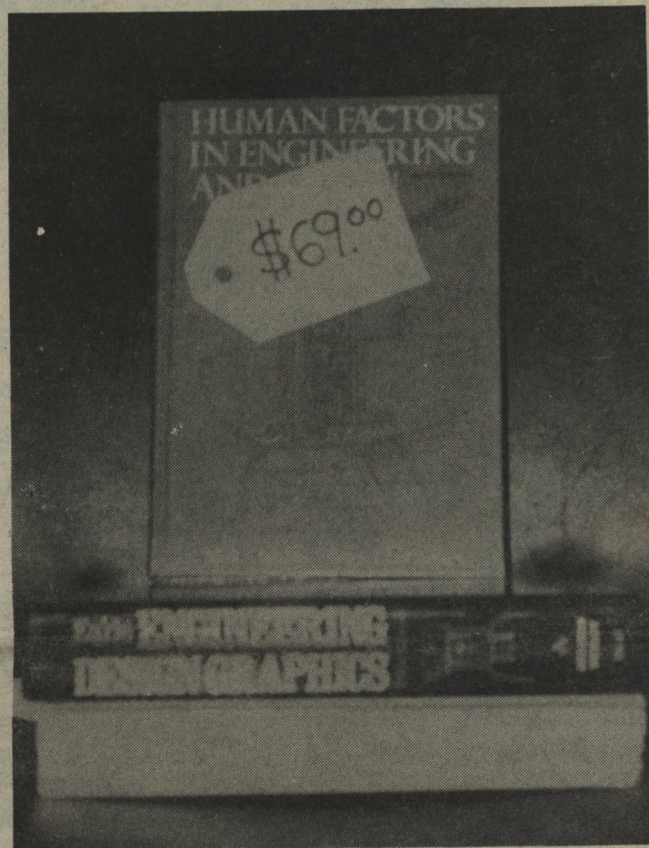
money... we don't" says Russ Stewart, manager of the UPEI bookstore for the past 17 years. The reason why our bookstore is profitable is the popularity of the clothes and sweats. Almost all profits come from the sale of clothing. Mr. Stewart says, "If it weren't for the sale of clothes, then there would be an additional 5-7% mark-up on textbooks." As it stands now there is a 20% mark-up on textbooks, and all the profits from our bookstore go directly back to the University.

Many students wonder why it takes so long for orders to come in. Well, most books are printed in Toronto or the U.S.A. and shipping takes time, but, if your book is not on shelf at commencement of classes then the professor is usually to blame. Many professors wait until the last minute to order their books, even

though they are asked to order them as early as April for the September semester.

There also may be students who feel they are being ripped off. Mr. Stewart commented on this by saying, "I know a lot of students feel that they are being ripped off, but they aren't. We have an open door policy, anyone can come in and ask about prices." When asked about the possibility of sales on books that are in demand, Mr. Stewart said that it would be absolutely impossible for the bookstore to have sales.

The only answer to the rising cost of books seems to be to buy them used, but that can also present a problem. Under the present system that students use for buying and selling used books, its sometimes difficult to find the book you need. In the past, Bookswaps have not been a success. Another option



### Reality

would be to have a used bookstore to supplement our main bookstore. However, this is not feasible because the faculty will not give a commitment to use the same text for at least two years.

consequently a used bookstore would lose money.

The consensus is that we students will have to keep digging deeper and deeper to keep up with the ever-rising costs of an education.

#### 6¢ Publisher's Profit

The publisher's profit provides capital for market research, author development, and up-grading of customer service facilities. In general, the publisher develops the firm's list and improves services.

#### 11¢ Marketing

The salaries and travel expenses of sales representatives, advertising and promotion costs, catalogues and complimentary copies are the publisher's marketing costs.

#### 7¢ Editorial

Editorial expenses include the cost of acquiring the manuscript and required illustrations, and paying the salaries of the sponsoring editors, copy editors, and designers.

#### 12¢ Author's Royalty

The author's many months of writing, based on a lifetime's study and experience, are at the fingertips of the student for relatively few dollars.

#### 7¢ Corporate Taxes

Publishing companies, like all businesses, pay corporate taxes which in turn contribute to the operating expenses of your institution.

#### 14¢ Bookstore Personnel

Knowledgeable managers, buyers, salespeople and accounting people are required to keep the college or university bookstore running smoothly.

#### 11¢ Publisher's Overhead

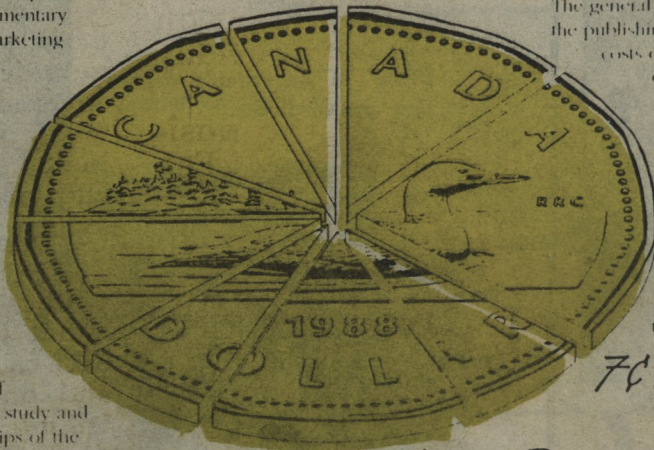
The general maintenance and operation of the publishing house includes the fixed costs of rent, heat, hydro as well as other operating expenses.

#### 25¢ Book Manufacture

Costs include setting the book and its complementary supplements in type, plate making, paper, printing and binding, and delivery to the publisher's warehouse.

#### 7¢ Bookstore Rent & Overhead

Rent, heat, hydro and shipping, are among the numerous other expenses incurred in ensuring prompt and efficient service to faculty and students.



Textbooks: A Valuable Part of Your Education!

